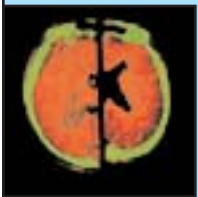


## ***The Virginia Alzheimer's Disease & Related Disorders Commission's Recommendations to the Governor & 2005 General Assembly***



Support the **addition of a full-time Curriculum Developer** within the Department of Criminal Justice Services to coordinate Alzheimer's disease and related disorders training for **all** public safety personnel in Virginia, at an additional cost of **\$40,000 per year**, bringing the total appropriation to \$90,000.



Recommend that a **Study of Mental Health Needs of Older Virginians** (including those with dementia who need psychiatric services) be conducted by **JLARC** or the **Joint Commission on Health Care**.



Restore **\$47,500** (at a minimum) in funding to the **Alzheimer's and Related Diseases Research Award Fund (ARDRAF)**, returning funding to its 2002 level of \$125,000. Additionally, increase its funding by **an additional \$25,000** to a total of \$150,000.

The Virginia Alzheimer's Disease (AD) and Related Disorders Commission is composed of 15 nonlegislative citizen members. The Commission advises the Governor and the Secretary of Health and Human Resources on issues related to AD and related disorders, as well as acting as an advocate for affected individuals, their families and caregivers. For more information on these recommendations or other issues related to AD and other related disorders, contact:

**Virginia Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission**  
c/o Janet Honeycutt  
1610 Forest Avenue, Suite 100  
Richmond, Virginia 23229  
Toll Free: 1-800-552-3402 (Nationwide Voice/TTY)  
Phone: (804) 662-9341  
Fax: (804) 662-9354  
E-mail: [Janet.Honeycutt@vda.virginia.gov](mailto:Janet.Honeycutt@vda.virginia.gov)  
Web site: [www.vda.virginia.gov/alzcommission.htm](http://www.vda.virginia.gov/alzcommission.htm)

# Supporting Data

## Education and Training

The current appropriation of \$50,000 provides training on Alzheimer's disease (AD) and related disorders to **law enforcement personnel only**.

As first responders, **all public safety personnel** may find themselves dealing with an individual suffering from AD or other dementia. These individuals are prone to wandering, and may be agitated, angry, aggressive or violent, thus endangering themselves and others.

**Adding a Curriculum Developer (1 FTE) at \$40,000 per year** would allow the training to be extended to fire, rescue and emergency medical service (EMS) personnel. This would insure that all first responders would understand how to interact effectively and humanely with persons suffering from dementia.

## Services

**Almost 20% of adults age 55 and older** experience specific mental disorders that are not a part of "normal aging." In addition, research indicates that the occurrence of mental disorders in older people are underreported in general.

Many older Virginians - including those with a dual diagnosis of AD or other dementias plus a severe mental illness, or a psychiatric or behavioral disorder - face closed doors when trying to find mental health services. A confluence of factors at both the federal and state levels often causes members of this population to "bounce" from one place to another, with little recourse for stabilization and improvement.

**Supporting an independent study** by JLARC or JCHC of the mental health needs of older Virginians, including those with dementia who need psychiatric services, would insure close scrutiny of the needs of this overlooked segment of the population.

## Research

Since 1982, Virginia has supported research into the causes of AD and related disorders via **the Alzheimer's and Related Diseases Research Award Fund (ARDRAF)**. It acts as a "seed grant," providing financial support for the gathering of preliminary data that is then used to attract funds for a larger study. Due to Virginia's budgetary difficulties, however, the ARDRAF appropriation has been **cut by 38% since 2002**.

**Restoring \$47,500 in annual funds to ARDRAF** would return the fund to its 2002 level of \$125,000. However, supporting **an additional \$25,000** appropriation would allow ARDRAF to pursue its goal of finding treatments/cures for AD and related disorders. It would also help **attract additional funds** to the Commonwealth for larger studies, as well as **enhancing Virginia's reputation** as a front runner in the fight against these diseases.